Countless Time

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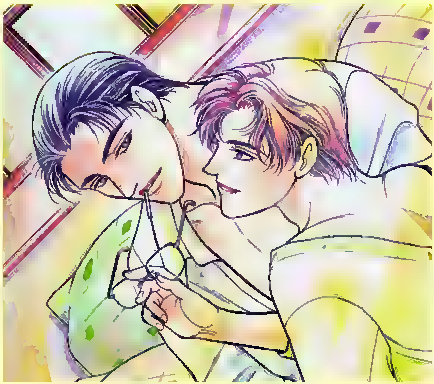

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A Place Where Good Things Happen!
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Mangaka Oumi Shenano
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Chapter 3

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COUNTLESS TIME

is looking for people who can help us to spread the love around. We're currently open for applications for

Editor

and

Japanese Translator(s).

Even if you're not sure how you'll do, give it a try.

Contact us at.

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「スキャンダル」水壬楓子 illust. 高星麻子 © MINAMI FUUKO TAKAKURA KOW / SHINSHOSHA COMICS

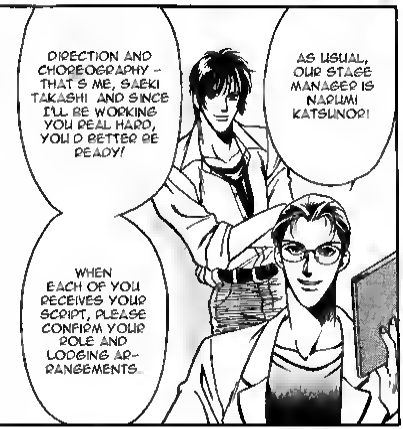
FIRST
STEP

SINANO PRESENTS

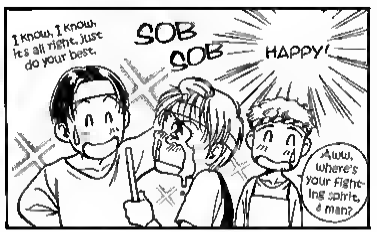
ONE
TWO
THREE
FOUR
FIVE
SIX
SEVEN
EIGHT
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
Dance & Drama Company
GARANCE
MOVE IT, TATSUYA!!
YES! SORRY!
IF YOU'RE WORN OUT ALREADY, HOW WILL YOU MAKE YOUR DEBUT? IT'LL BE A DISTANT DREAM!
DASH!
I'LL TRY HARDER!!
WAH!
OOPS

HEY, YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF ENERGY, NEWBIE!
UWAH NARUMI-SAN!
WELL, THAT'S
Not really
ATTENTION PLEASE!
THE TITLE IS BLUE, IT'S A FANTASY SET IN THE NEAR FUTURE
NOW, LET ME ANNOUNCE THE CAST OF SARANCE'S SPRINGTIME PERFORMANCE, WITH TWO MONTHS TO GO
IN THE ROLE OF MARIKA THE FEMME FATALE WITH WHOM SHUU FALLS HEAD OVER HEELS IN LOVE MISS AZUSA MIZUHO IN A GUEST APPEARANCE
THE LEAD ROLE OF SHUU WILL BE PLAYED BY KOUNO YOSHIKI
THANK YOU! ♡

WHAT?
MIZUNO TATSUYA.
AND,
SHUU'S ALTER EGO DAI CREATED BECAUSE OF A BUG IN THE MAIN COMPUTER, WILL BE--
I'M.. I'M..
YES. YES. I WILL.
DO YOUR BEST, TATSUYA!
THE ROLE OF DAI IS A DIFFICULT ONE, AS HE CONTINUALLY QUESTIONS HIS OWN EXISTENCE AS OPPOSED TO THE ORIGINAL MACHINE*
*The original machine is Shuu.


DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY - THAT'S ME, SAEKI TAKASHI AND SINCE I'LL BE WORKING YOU REAL HARD, YOU'D BETTER BE READY!
AS USUAL, OUR STAGE MANAGER IS NAFUMI KATSUNORI!
WHEN EACH OF YOU RECEIVES YOUR SCRIPT, PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR ROLE AND LODGING ARRANGEMENTS.

HEY TATSUYA, YOU!
OH
SO...
piqued
I'M FLOORED! YOU ENROLLED JUST SIX MONTHS AGO AND YOU GET SUCH AN IMPORTANT ROLE?!
Dunk


I know, I know. It's all right. Just do your best.
SOB SOB
HAPPY!
Aww, where's your fighting spirit, a man?

IN OUR ROLES THIS TIME, TATSUYA AND I ARE A TEAM THAT REPRESENTS "TWO FACES" OF A CHARACTER.
DUE TO THIS RELATIONSHIP, I THINK WE'LL BE REHEARSING A LOT
THANK YOU IN ADVANCE!
THAT'S WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY.
TO BE ABLE TO ACT WITH YOSHIKI-SAN IS MY DREAM!
HEH
HEY, IF YOU GET TOO EXCITED, YOU MIGHT HURT YOURSELF! BE CAREFUL, NEWBIE!
RUFFLE RUFFLE
OW!
HE'S JUST CONCERNED
NARUMI INJURED HIS KNEE 3 YEARS AGO AND RETIRED FROM HIS POSITION
NOW HE ONLY WORKS BACKSTAGE
REALLY, NARUMI-SAN
Newbie, newbie, newbie
ANYWAY, GO FOR IT!
SAEKI, I'LL COME UP WITH AN EQUIPMENT PLAN.

I KNOW...
BUT I...
CLAP
STOP!
TATSUYA! DON'T THINK THE LINES ARE FOR YOUR BENEFIT ALONE!
PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE OTHER PERSON'S LINES...
AND LEARN TO READ THEIR RHYTHM.
IN MY SINGLE-MINDED DESIRE TO JOIN GARANCE I DID NOTHING BUT DANCE
WHEN IT COMES TO DRAMA, I'M ALL BUT A NOVICE
WILT
YES, SORRY SIR!
CATCHING THE OTHER PARTY'S RHYTHM IN A PLAY IS THE SAME AS IN DANCING.
DON'T THINK TOO MUCH IT WILL BE EASIER
YOSHIKI-SAN

DON'T SPOIL HIM, YOSHIKI!
YOU AND TATSUYA NEED TO BUILD UP MORE STAMINA!
A 90-MINUTE PERFORMANCE REQUIRES A LOT OF EFFORT
I'LL DO MY BEST!
Yeah lots of problems
Glance
IS SOMEONE HERE?
OPEN
HUH?
THUD
!!
JUST DON'T THINK ABOUT THE ACTING
WHAT I CAN DO NOW IS PRACTICE DANCING
PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

NARUMI-
SAN!

RATTLE
NARUMI-SAN!
THUD
WOBBLE
AH!
SO GOOD!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT...
NARUMI-SAN?!
TATSU-YA?
ESPECIALLY YOSHIKI.
DON'T TELL ANYBODY.
DO YOU ALWAYS PRACTICE BY YOURSELF THIS LATE?
YO!
I'M OKAY. DON'T WORRY
Here's a towel!
YES, SOMETIMES
Oh, thanks
OH, TATSUYA
THAT GUY, HE REALLY WANTS ME TO COME BACK ON STAGE.
SINCE YOU'RE HERE, GIVE ME A HAND WITH THE STAGE SETS.

I, TOO...
WOULD LIKE TO SEE NAOMI-SAN PERFORM AGAIN!
ERM, I...
SEVEN YEARS AGO, MY COUSIN WHO WAS LIVING HERE IN TOKYO, TOOK ME
TO SEE A PERFORMANCE BY GARANCE
I WAS JUST A KID, BUT I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED IT WAS ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS!
ESPECIALLY THE COMBINATION OF NAOMI-SAN AND YOSHIKI-SAN...
IT WAS SO MAGNIFICENT THAT BEFORE IT I FORGOT TO BREATHE.

SO I THOUGHT, ONE DAY I WANT TO STAND ON THE SAME STAGE AS NARUMI-SAN AND THE OTHERS
AND ALTHOUGH MY PARENTS WERE AGAINST IT, I LEFT HOKKAIDO AND CAME HERE!
IN FACT, I THINK THAT NARUMI-SAN WANTS TO RETURN TO THE STAGE, TOO. DON'T YOU?
TATSU-YA
OH!
SHOCK
EH?
I HAVE NO LINGERING ATTACH-MENT TO THE STAGE
I JUST WANT TO DANCE. SO I DANCE
SORRY I
THEN
THEN,
COULD YOU PLEASE BE MY COACH?!
WHEN I LOOK AT YOU YOU REMIND ME OF SOMEONE
EJECTUS

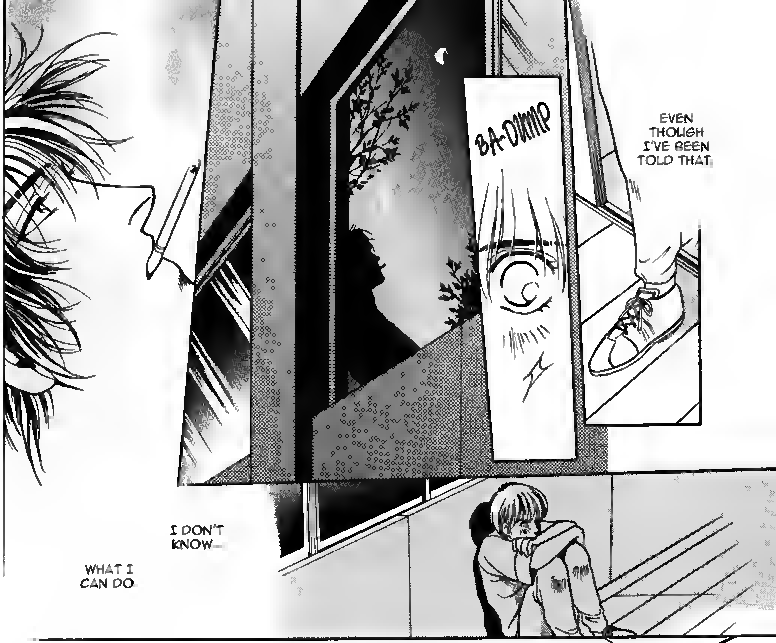
I WANT TO BE PERFECT
I WANT TO BE AN ACTOR WHO MAKES AN IMPRESSION ON THE AUDIENCE,
LIKE NARUMI-SAN AND YOSHIKI-SAN!
YOU'RE A PASSIONATE GUY!
Listening to you, I feel a little embarrassed
ROAR
I AM!
THANKS TO YOU!
WELL THAT'S OKAY, I GUESS
It would be embarrassing to have one's debut ruined
TO PRACTICE FOR ONE HOUR EVERY NIGHT WILL BE ENOUGH
IN EXCHANGE YOU'LL HELP ME OUT WITH THE STAGE SETS
YES! YES!
NARUMI-SAN IS GOING TO BE MY COACH!
All right
RIGHT, I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU WANT!
THANK YOU!
How come I'm such a klutz?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

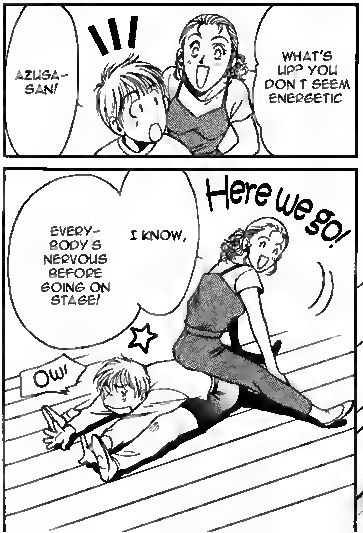
THE FIRST STEP IS SWEET!
NOW, BOTH WITH THE DANCE MOVES AND PRONUN-CIATION,
YOU ARE NOT CONFIDENT ENOUGH
NEXT, YOU BLINK TOO MUCH
SEE, TATSUYA?
THE "EYES" THEMSELVES ARE THE "ACTOR"
AND WITH THE LINES THAT REFLECT THE FEELINGS,
YOU HAVE TO LOOK STRAIGHT INTO THE OTHER PARTY'S EYES
BA-DUMP
THE OTHER PARTY'S EYES
!!
GRAB
NA-NARUMI-SA...
TRY TO SAY YOUR LINES USING ENOUGH FORCE TO PUSH MY HANDS BACK

WHAT WHAT'S HAPPENING?
I FEEL SO.. STRANGE..
I..
"WHY AM I HERE?
"IF I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT, THE MEANING OF MY EXISTENCE
LOUDER!
IF IF I.."
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
NAOMI-SAN WILL HEAR IT!
MY HEART IS BEATING SO HARD!
TATSU-YA?
RATTLE

HEY!
NARUMI-SAN TEACHES ME EVERY NIGHT!
DANCING TOO?
HMM
YES!
TATSUYA!
YOSHIKI.
I HEARD VOICES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND CAME TO CHECK
INDEPENDENT PRACTICE? VERY IMPRESSIVE!
Oh!
AS I THOUGHT, YOUR KNEE IS BETTER
AH! MY bad
YOU'RE WRONG
EH?
IT'S BECAUSE I AM WEAK
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
YOSHIKI!
BE-CAUSE
I CHOSE SAEKI, NOT KATSUNORI
IS IT MY FAULT THAT YOU LIED AND ABANDONED THE STAGE THAT YOU SO LOVED?
THAT'S ENOUGH TATSUYA IS HERE!

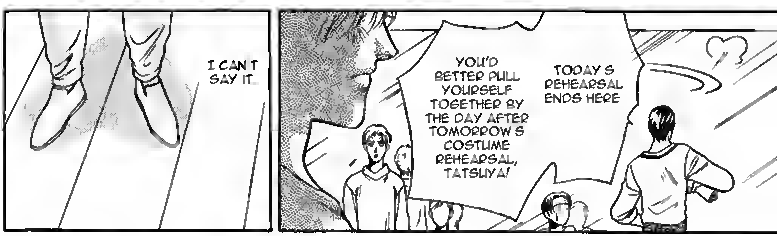
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOU TWO,
BUT...
PUTTING IT LIKE THAT
WAS CRUEL...
DO YOU...
LIKE KATSUNORI?
NARUMI-SAN!
SORRY, TSUY... WE'LL STOP HERE TODAY.
NO MATTER WHAT I SAY
IT WOULD ONLY HURT HIM...
YOSHIKI-SAN...
I CAN'T HEAL HIM...
IF SO, HELP HIM
I'M NO USE...


BA-DUMP
EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT
I DON'T KNOW...
WHAT I CAN DO


AZUSA-SAN!
WHAT'S UP? YOU DON'T SEEM ENERGETIC
EVERY-BODY'S NERVOUS BEFORE GOING ON STAGE!
I KNOW.
Here we go!
Ow!
Haa...
SINCE THAT TIME I DON'T HAVE ANY STRENGTH LEFT

SIMILAR TO HOW YOSHIKI USED TO BE
EVEN THE DANCING ITSELF... REALLY
SUCH FEELING!
REALLY?
BUT, AS EXPECTED FROM SAEKI-CHAN,
I THINK IT'S NICE CASTING TATSUYA-KUN AS DAI
BOTH WITH THOSE DETER-MINED EYES!
ME...?
OH I SEE
We went to the dance school together, you know
You have what look so wonderfully obst-inate
HE SAID THAT ABOUT ME
TATSUYA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHEN I LOOK AT YOU YOU REMIND ME OF SOMEONE
SO THAT'S WHY...

DO YOU REALLY PUT YOUR "HEART" INTO IT?!
WHAT'S WITH THE FLAT ACTING?!
IN THIS SCENE, DAI, WHO HAS STOPPED OBSESSING WITH SHIJI AS THE ORIGINAL, TELLS MARIKA OF HIS HEARTFELT LOVE FOR HER.
BOTH FOR YOU AND THE PLAY, THIS IS THE CLIMAX!


I CAN'T SAY IT.
YOU'D BETTER PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER BY THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW'S COSTUME REHEARSAL, TATSUYA!
TODAY'S REHEARSAL ENDS HERE

Probably trying to say "He's sinking deeper and deeper" *6

OH,
YOU REALLY DO CONSIDER EVERYTHING
OF COURSE,
who do you think I am?
I CERTAINLY THOUGHT HE WAS LIKE YOU USED TO BE,
BUT THAT'S NOT THE REASON WHY I LET HIM JOIN.
WHEN I FIRST SAW HIM AT THE ENROLLMENT TEST,
LOTS OF THINGS..
SO I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO MAKE HIM ACT AS DAI
HE'S NOT A REPLICA, HE'S COMPLETELY HIS OWN SELF AND HAS BRIGHT POTENTIAL.
I'M NOT IN THE MOOD TO GO TO THE REHEARSAL STUDIO TONIGHT..
BA-DUMP
CLINK
CRAP...
TURN
BAM
OOPH
NARUMI-SAN?!

I'M RELYING ON YOU
TATSU-YA!
Umm
Umm
NAPU
GRAB
Drag
Drag
Nah it's nothing
Hm? Did you say something?
BANG
Yeah work, work!
BANG
BANG
HERE ASSEMBLE THIS SCAFFOLDING QUICKLY!
AND IF YOU CUT ANY CORNERS, IT'LL BE YOU LOT THAT GET INJURED!
Hoss
Uh-oh
The other stage hands have finished
HEY, DIDN'T WE AGREE TO FINISH THE OVERDUE STAGE SETS TONIGHT?
Wheeze
Wheeze
I WAS WAITING AND WAITING. BUT YOU DIDN'T SHOW UP. SO I CAME TO LOOK FOR YOU,
WHEN THERE YOU ARE ENGAGING IN A BIT OF VOYEURISM, YOU CREEP!
V Voyeur that's it!

I..
BANG
BANG
BANG
WHEN THIS PERFORMANCE IS OVER, I'VE DECIDED TO LEAVE THE TROUPE
EH?
NO WAY!
I CAN'T TEACH YOU ANYMORE, I'M SORRY.
NARUMI-SAN IS... LEAVING THE TROUPE?
NARUMI-SAN..
WON'T BE HERE ANYMORE?
THAT'S
DON'T GO, NARUMI-SAN!
THAT'S NO GOOD!
CRASH
I LOVE YOU!

TATSU-YA
I KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE FEELINGS FOR ME
I REMIND YOU OF YOSHIKI-SAN THAT'S WHY YOU LOOK AFTER ME
I DON'T MIND!
YOU CAN USE ME AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR YOKISHI-SAN,
IF IT MAKES YOU BETTER, NAFUMI-SAN
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING TATSUYA?
THAT'S NOT THE REASON I SPEND TIME WITH YOU
TATSU
NN..!
!!
PUSH
IS THAT YOUR PITY?!

SLAM
GRAB
YOU'RE WRONG!
!
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO BE HIS REPLACEMENT, I'LL DO IT!
PULL
SLAM
!!

OW!
HURTS..
AAH!
AAH!
NA.
NAPU MI..
-SA..
DON'T
PLEASE DON'T GO..
NAPU MI -SAN..
Haa Haa

PAT
TATSU-YA...
Haa
Haa
YOU ARE NOT YOSHIKI
NARUMI-SAN?
Haa
YOU ARE NOT YOSHIKI
Uuu
COLLAPSE
OH!

"TO BE IN LOVE" MEANT
AT THAT MOMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME I REALLY KNEW WHAT THE WORDS
NARUMI-SAN... NARUMI-SAN...
UUU...
UUUHUUU...
NARUMI-SAN!
AND I TOO, UNDERSTOOD
NARUMI-SAN'S
LET'S GO!
YEAH!
IT'S A FEELING I'M UNABLE TO SHAKE OFF.

MORE PRECISELY...
I SHOULD HAVE FOUND THE ANSWER BY THROWING MYSELF INTO THAT SITUATION
I'M NO ONE'S SUBSTITUTE
SHUU!
OAI...
I'M NO LONGER HUNG UP ON YOU!
I AM NOT YOUR SHADOW!
I'LL SAY IT USING MY OWN WORDS.
MARIKA ...
I HOPE YOU CAN UNDER-STAND ME.
!!!
OH,
THAT GUY IS ST...NDING AT THE WRONG SPOT.

THIS LOVE OF MINE... IT'S MY TRUE "FEELING". NOT A REPLICA OF ANYONE ELSE'S.
HEY!
THE SPOTLIGHT!
I WANT TO SAY IT TO YOU
DUET...
UH
TATSU-YA!
HAHAHA FUNNY ISN'T IT?
FINALLY, THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO BE SET FREE FROM THE PRISON OF MY HEART, AND YET...
HEAR MY MESSAGE
AT THIS TIME... I'LL BE TERMINATED
HEAR MY MESSAGE

NARUMI-SAN
THESE FEELINGS ARE REAL!
BUT,
EVEN IF THIS BODY IS ONLY A MIRROR IMAGE
I LOVE YOU!!
ROAR ROAR
APPLAUSE APPLAUSE
ROAR ROAR

I'M SO TIRED,
BUT I FEEL REALLY GOOD
SIGH
THAT EXPRESSION, IT'S CLEAR THAT YOU ARE SMITTEN BY THE GLAMOUR OF THE STAGE!
I'VE BEEN PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST BY SAEKI-SAN
"For my own good"
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO THE LAUNCH PARTY?
EVERYBODY IS ALREADY THERE!
HE ALSO TOLD ME THAT HE FORGOT SOMETHING AND ASKED TO GET IT FOR HIM
NARUMI-SAN...
ONCE YOU KNOW THE FEELING OF THE LIGHTS ON YOU AND HEAR THE APPLAUSE,
YOU'LL ALWAYS CRAVE MORE

GAGANCE STARTED OUT OF OUR UNIVERSITY CLUB WITH SAEKI, OSHIKI, AND ME,
SO ALL THE MORE I FELT THAT I WAS JUST ABANDONED
I WAS SULKING, JUST LIKE A BRAT!
SORRY ABOUT WHAT I DID IT'S MY FAULT THAT YOU STAGGERED THERE
NO, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT I JUST DIDN'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP
I guess it hurt
IT IS STILL MY FAULT
SO EVEN THAT SMALL INJURY, I USED IT AS AN EXCUSE
..TATSUYA
YES?
AFTER I STUMBLED I STAYED ON, BUT WASN'T MOVING AHEAD,
YET SOMEHOW I FEEL LIKE I CAN PUT THAT BEHIND NOW..

IF I'M WITH YOU, I CAN TAKE THE NEXT STEP.
PLEASE LET ME COME ALONG!
SO THEN ABOUT LEAVING THE TROUPE?
POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.
THAT'S GOOD!
It's good, really
It's about time!
FIRST STEP /END